

OPINION

The Centre Daily Times
is a community connector.
We are passionate about our
responsibility as Centre County's
most compelling and trustworthy
information source.

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THEIRVIEW

Extend yourselves into community'

Service to others is one of the most important things all people of faith can do. Giving our time to help other people is the best way to demonstrate our belief in, and obedience to, a greater power. As written in scripture, "faith without works is dead," and "whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen."



Tyson Daniels

Everyone has different gifts and talents, and it is vital to grow and develop these in ways that maximize our ability to help others. One defining aspect of my faith is sharing God's love for creation and humanity with everyone I meet. Since my speaking abilities are more on par with those of the prophet Moses than Jesus, I prefer to let my faith shine through acts of kindness and service. Any service rendered, no matter how insignificant it seems, if you are doing it, promotes well-being and furthers God's plans for us on Earth.

Anything from holding doors for people or helping to carry bags, to yielding the right of way in traffic can be beneficial. Even smiling more in public can make a difference. Little things matter. When thinking about service and volunteering, it is not the grand gestures that first come to mind: working at an inter-city soup kitchen, building houses with Habitat for Humanity, traveling to assist with disaster relief. These are indeed worthwhile outlets providing needed service to people in need, but the grand gestures draw us out of daily environments and limit how often we can participate. It is just as important and fulfilling to focus on smaller tasks on a more local scale.



Bobbi Nichols, left, gives Anne Burgevin, right, a nail while working on the floor of Habitat for Humanity's Thompson Place Site in State College in 2010.

CDT file photo/Nabil K. Mark

Whether tutoring a struggling student, providing meals and companionship to elderly citizens, doing yard work for a neighbor recovering from surgery or simply listening to a friend vent about their problems, you are doing God's work. Because when it comes down to it, volunteer service is about more than just doing chores for other people. Taking time out of your day to complete tasks that another person is unable to do is certainly important by itself, but doing these things also affirms the recipient's worth as a person. With every conversation, every

leaf raked, every car fixed, every cookie baked, you say to that person, "I see you, and know you. You are a beloved child of God and are important to me." That recognition is the true heart of service, and the friendship built upon it is a reflection of Heaven, a place where we all live more openly toward each other, serving and loving everyone who comes our way.

So I encourage you, brothers and sisters, to extend yourselves into the community, and find something you can help with on a weekly or monthly basis. The website VolunteerMatch.org has

listed 187 volunteer organizations that are active in the State College area. I am sure one of them will be able to help your talents blossom for the good of all. I assure you there is no greater feeling than feeling the gratitude of a friend, combined with knowing that you have done a good thing for them.

Tyson Daniels is a member of University Baptist and Brethren Church, works at Camp Blue Diamond and Houck Homecare, and volunteers as an EMT, sound technician, youth worker and in many other roles.